THE COMMONWEAL

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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

FROM TIME to time, of late, there have appeared in the columns of our daily press brief news dispatches concerning an event which will occur in a South American country during the month of October. The Catholic press have contained much fuller accounts—naturally enough—of the same event, the thirty-second International Eucharistic Congress. These news dispatches and special, descriptive articles will of course become more frequent and lengthy as the preparations for the event are succeeded by the event itself, which will occupy four days, from October 10 to October 14, inclusive. During the fifty-three years during which the International Eucharistic Congress has been functioning, since the first session held in Lille, France, the public attention of the world outside the Church has been challenged by the exceedingly unusual, and highly picturesque character of these gatherings, held in many parts of the earth with steadily increasing power and beauty and impressiveness. There was a gap between 1914 and 1922 produced by the Great War and its consequences, after which the Congress was resumed in 1922, being held at two year intervals since that date. In 1926 Chicago was the scene. Montreal had previously, in 1910, been host to the Congress, so that the present session in Buenos Aires marks the third assembling of the Congress on American soil. France, Belgium, Germany, England, Italy, Ireland, Africa, Spain, Austria, Malta, Holland and other countries have also witnessed these gatherings, to which have come Catholic prelates, priests, and laity representing practically all of the races and nations of humanity, bound together in the unity of the Catholic Church, testifying to their common faith.

It is this one point more than any other aspect of the Congress which impresses a lay observer, even at a distance from the event itself. Catholic observers, of course, recognize the central, primary importance of each successive public demonstration of the Eucharist. The non-Catholic observers at least recognize the power which the Eucharistic celebration has to bind together the world-wide members of the Catholic Church. Perhaps the present celebration may serve to throw a light upon the part which the Catholic

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Church is today playing in the vast human drama which appears to be approaching—if it is not already arrived at—a crisis as deep, at least, and as decisive, as any in the history of our race.

It is far from the purpose of this journal—indeed it is quite beyond its competence as the organ of a group of laymen—to assert definitely and positively what part it is that the Catholic Church should take relative to particular problems among the bewildering number, and still more bewildering complexity, of the problems which in their totality now press upon us all. There is the problem of nationality, for example. Catholics are bound together by a supernational unity, and yet they are also separated by national relations, duties, and interests—even to such a degree that they are found facing each other—as on the battlefields of the Chaco today—in warfare. Meanwhile, the spirit of nationalism is growing ever more intense, bitter, exclusive and aggressive. Where, and how, are Catholics, as Catholics, to draw the line between their duties and desires as Catholics, and their duties and desires as members of a particular nation? Or as members of a particular racial group?

Again, there is the economic problem. Complicating the already complicated racial and nationalistic rivalries and conflicts, the economic struggles of class against class, of interest against interest, of system against system, of agriculture against industrialism, necessarily divide Catholics as well as all others into separate and often warring groups, in spite of the fact that as Catholics they are united by beliefs which in principle provide for the reasonable solution of economic, as well as all other social, problems. It is in the matter of the application of the principles held in common that the differences arise.

That point, surely, is obvious—even to banality. Immediately there follows another point, namely, the question of how the unchanging principles of the Church may be so expressed in practise by those who hold them as to lessen if not completely to do away with the strife and divisions among Catholics, as a prelude to a similar procedure among others. For if Catholics cannot more generally agree and act together to lessen and reduce the universal confusion and conflict, how can they expect or hope that non-Catholics, even those most sympathetic to the teachings of the Church, will pay any attention to those teachings —those teachings which yet all Catholics agree to be the principal source of the true solutions of all human problems?

Surely, we think, it is certain that the Eucharistic Congress is the answer given by the Church to this burning question of how Catholics may best begin to apply Catholic Action—to apply it to themselves, first of all, and then to the world of which they form a part. We think it must be so because of the way in which the Church itself has acted, and continues to act, in this matter of the Congress. All the resources of the incomparably well-organized system of the Church, as an institution, are employed to call the attention of the members of the Church—and of all mankind as well—to the fact that the Church as a teaching body, the Church as an international, nay, a supernational bond of unity among men, the Church as a source of peace and brotherhood and justice and love among men, has no jurisdiction, no authority, no power at all save only, and only because, her jurisdiction, and authority, and power, and wisdom, and love, are given to her by Almighty God, through Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Christ still present on the earth, and man as well as God; Christ vivifying His Church, and all the members of His Church not by mere remembrance only, but by His actual Presence; Christ in His Church teaching mankind the only true solutions of all their individual and collective problems—it seems to us that this is the practical meaning of the great event occurring in the Argentine, even as it is continually occurring on every altar and in every tabernacle in all the world. And if we can realize and apply that lesson, all will be well. It is not for us to preach, but laymen may at least report a sermon, and it seems to us that all the great philosophies that proceed from the study of Catholic teaching depend for their successful application upon the degree in which Catholics realize the meaning of the Church's action at Buenos Aires.

WEEK BY WEEK

IT WAS a week for soothsayers, and one could take one's choice between purveyors of glad tidings and glum Cassandras offering lumps of future black as coal. The general tenor of conversation was, however, somewhat gaseous—as is normal in a world boiling so hard that nobody can look into the kettle.

The Trend of Events

Government refinancing offered Americans nearly two billion dollars' worth of new securities to put in strong boxes where Liberty bonds and Treasury certificates used to be. The demand was not brisk, critical views of the national fiscal future blending with something very akin to a capital strike. While Canadian stock exchanges were watching tickers behave in a frolicsome mood, doubtless with assistance from across the border, Wall Street and elsewhere watched the failure of efforts to rig a good bond market. Industry, taking a far-flung textile strike on the chin, seemed prepared for more of the same kind of thing. It was predicted that social unrest might eventually lead to a "general strike," necessitating the shut-down of all business and some sort of presidential emergency intervention akin to that which

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followed the banking holiday of 1933. On the other hand it was likewise stated that government spending would slowly but surely achieve results and produce enough buying power to relieve the pressure of immense relief expenditures on the earnings of capital and labor. It is a safer bet that unless current stagnation and decline are halted soon, criticism will force a taking apart of the reconstruction machinery now in operation to see what works and what does not. This we believe to be a very desirable and badly needed overhauling. The only way of forestalling a conflict between absolutes—and thus of conserving a democracy—is to effect continuous compromises in the rationality of which workers of all sorts can believe.

DEEPENING unrest on the European continent exacts more than usual attention. The ties between the Old World and the New—sentimental, economic and financial—are closer than even the initiated usually realize. If for some reason this association were to be completely disrupted, the effects upon our whole life would be beyond the powers of wizard calculators and masters of the imagination. The rest of the world put together does not mean to each of us a third as much in terms of bread-and-butter or of heart-and-soul as does the relatively small area from Athens and Leningrad west to the tip of Queenstown harbor. And the truth of the matter is that Europe is flirting desperately with Master Chaos. Nationalistic sentiment without any ballast is making stratospheric flights every day. Germany is like nothing so much as a padded cell, with an hysterical psychopath running up and down inside. And in sober truth a number of recent utterances by Mussolini are no better—are, as a matter of fact, shockingly immoral and grandiosely ridiculous. One may say that unless the term "Christian civilization" has lost all the meaning it ever had, the future is not a question of which race or nation has the sole title to the universe but rather of which lacks the decency to realize that a monopoly on the word "barbarian" will be his for keeps who does most to bring about the next war in Europe. That conflict would bring about that which is now unthinkable—the end of the Atlantic as a sea of consequence.

The Morro Castle

WHAT WILL account for the tragic accident to the SS. Morro Castle, which burned off the coast of New Jersey with a loss of more than 135 lives? No doubt everyone will follow with interest the details of the investigation which is opening as we write. This was almost a brand-new ship. Yet it fell a victim not to the fury of the elements but seemingly to the very modernity of its equipment. Marine engineers are proud of the really amazing device which, if an attendant merely pushes a button on a centrally operated control board, pours tons of flame-quenching gas into any room where a fire has started. They tell you that ocean liners are built so that a wall of iron can immediately be put round any part of the vessel where a fire is in progress. Life-boats, bigger and better in every way, cling to the upper decks; and crew discipline is very much more reliable, on the whole, than it used to be. Nevertheless, the Morro Castle—like the two huge French liners which went up in smoke during recent years—was soon as red and hot as a brush bonfire. Practically all who were saved jumped to the water with old-fashioned life belts about them, and swam after the fashion of swarthy Athenian mariners to a rescue ship. Whether all this happened accidentally or came as the result of a sinister arson plot may never be determined. At least equally interesting is this question: is there not too much confidence in equipment for its own sake, and too much forgetfulness of the constant vigilance exacted of those in charge of the safety of others? Whether the means of transportation be a ship or a train, a bus or a taxi, the public has a right to demand far better supervision than it is currently getting. That is the lesson of the Morro Castle disaster.

All the People's Money

THE RECEIPTS of the United States government for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, compared with those of a year ago, make rather interesting reading that is important to every citizen. The first report of the Treasury, just made, reveals that total receipts this year were $2,672,239,194.52, an increase over the fiscal year ending in 1933 of $1,052,399,970.22. An ejaculation of amazement would hardly be out of order here. A breakdown of the total shows that internal revenue collections were this year $1,483,790,969.16, an increase over 1933 of $610,743,148.97; income taxes yielded $817,025,339.72, an increase of $70,233,935.61; and processing taxes for the benefit of agriculture, which were collected for the first time in the year ending in 1934, amounted to $371,422,885.64. The phenomenal gains over the preceding year were accounted for not only by improvements in business but also by changes in the taxing system. For instance, due to provisions of the 1932 Revenue Act which in the past year became fully effective, the yield from estate taxes rose to $103,985,288 in 1934 from $28,693,061 in 1933. The National Recovery Act accounted for $80,168,344 from a capital stock tax, no such tax having previously been levied; $50,229,122 from a 5 percent tax on dividends; and $77,645,622 from an additional $.005 a gallon levy on gasoline. The tax on fermented malt

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liquors brought into the Treasury $168,959,585.17 in 1934, compared with $35,158,272.19 in 1933; that on distilled spirits, $85,960,064.20, and on wines, $3,991,683.25, a total of $89,951,747.45 in 1934, compared with only $8,021,550.25 in 1933, before repeal. The higher estate and gift tax rates of the 1934 Revenue Act and the various liquor taxes are expected to yield even greater returns in the year ending in 1935. All told the picture is impressive both in the magnitude of the business transacted and in the indications of actual social economic changes going on. The cost of collecting the internal revenue last year was $1.25 per $100, compared with $1.85 per $100 for the year ending in 1933.

Relief Frauds

THE FRAUDS which have recently been uncovered in the relief claims of a number of New York families disclose one of the inevitable difficulties in the administration of charity. The temptation to get as much as possible, in defiance of fairness and decency, when there is any agency, public or private, willing to give, will always operate upon a certain number of people. It has necessitated the inquiries, the questionnaires—all that machinery of investigation which has become a part of any systematic charity, and which often, of course, is overworked or overstressed at the expense of true humanity. For all of that, it cannot be done away with. Particularly in the case of the municipal relief work of a large city, where the public bounty is dispensed on a sweeping scale, must there be constant vigilance against dishonesty and imposition. The present Commissioner of Welfare, William Hodson, has not neglected this aspect of relief work, though he has always emphasized the need for speedy relief first where relief is obviously required. This is surely the right approach, even though it may result in some temporary overgiving. The present situation does not appear to be serious, considering the amount of relief disbursed altogether. The city has already recovered some $50,000 from false relief claims, and other prosecutions are pending. This effective action, coupled with the Commissioner's warning to other offenders to get off the relief rolls voluntarily before it is too late, should serve to keep the number of cases to a minimum.

The Catholic Hour

EXCELLENCE is a difficult thing to maintain, but one may say of the "Catholic Hour" that the addresses it has offered are of a strikingly uniform goodness. There are change of tone and attitude, of course, but one notices no obvious deviation from the standard. The thought suggests itself that educationally such a service may be very useful. If the radio is a boon to those who wish to study great musical compositions by listening to them again and again, why should not many learn to follow the organization and development of thought in a sermon? This is, to begin with, one of the oldest and most familiar of literary forms. It can run the gamut of intellectualized emotions, from those aroused by contemplation of august religious truths to those inspired by the tenuity and loveliness of human fate. The diction reckons with this emotional compass; it is richer and more fervent than ordinary speech, even approaching sometimes the special eloquence of poetry. But since the sermon is fundamentally concerned with "being"—that is, with things which *are* more ultimately than even the cosmos—it has also a firm and orderly structure reposing on foundations of old text and teaching and planned in accordance. To observe what use a preacher makes of Scripture; to discern in his method the intellectual habit of the Church; to notice in the language a wedding of old rhythms and new—surely these are matters which thousands could observe to advantage. Careful listening would aid the faithful to more profitable occupancy of Sunday pews, and clergymen to more impressive and fruitful utterance.

Mooney's Mother

IT IS not easy to understand the action of the authorities of San Quentin prison in refusing entry to the funeral cortege of the mother of Thomas Mooney. Their original refusal to allow Mooney to leave the prison under guard to attend the burial services seemed hard to the point of meriting protest. A similar privilege has often been accorded by prison wardens to prisoners whose guilt is beyond dispute; and the guilt of Mooney is an exceedingly open question. However, that refusal might have been defended on the ground of the recent unrest on the Pacific coast. Mooney is a controversial figure and a symbol to many involved in the agitation, and his appearance might have been the signal for some disastrous mass outbreak. No such argument can be used to defend this second refusal, nor does it seem that any imaginable imputation of motives to the members of the funeral cortege should be allowed to defend it. It is not necessary to imagine that they had a motive, beyond giving an imprisoned man a glimpse of his dead mother's face; but if they had—if they were staging a challenge, or seeking publicity, both of which appear unlikely in the face of the smallness of their numbers and the quietness of their behavior—that would not have altered the case. The old woman was dead, and her son had a right, in common humanity, to see her in her coffin. The authorities' attitude has been ill-judged and inhuman, and it is only too likely they will be made to regret it.

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1934 AND POLITICAL CHANGE

By CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

The contemporary citizen, avers Mr. Thompson in the following paper, is too prone to see himself in a position utterly divorced from the past. He is likely to assume that a change in political action is unprecedented. As a matter of fact an interesting parallel can be drawn between Mr. Roosevelt and Andrew Jackson, while an historian could easily chart the evolution of political power and show that important "saltations" have occurred generations ago. America in 1934 is therefore "not new."—The Editors.

AMONG the laughable absurdities of that comical creation the human mind is the inveterate complacency with which it dwells on the difference between its present environment and its past ones, instead of on the resemblances. The differences are superficial; the resemblances eternal. It is an accepted truism of 1934 that nothing like 1934 has ever existed, that politically and sociologically we are voyaging on an unknown sea. But it is only superficially that there is a difference. The more innocent among the star-gazers harp on how capitalism has collapsed and how revolution is either impending or beginning. But one who would himself like to believe it, but who has sense and perspective, coldly points out that capitalism collapses at every such recurrence and that revolution always impends and never happens. George Soule, first reciting each portent since the stock crash of 1929, brutally informs the happy hopefuls that "these are the common marks of hard times," and "there is not one of these phenomena [which he has just listed] which has not occurred in previous depressions." There has never been a time when revolution was more than a year off. In his old age Karl Marx became pessimistic enough to doubt whether it would not take a decade or so more. When, in our time, there has been a revolution, it has been only a convulsion, socially. Even in Russia, the dream of Lenin is being replaced by a hard and fast social order, the foreign aims of whose directors differ in no essential from those of Peter the Great.

This article means to deal with such comparatively small matters as American political changes and the great (imaginary) difference between the political America of Franklin Roosevelt and that of Andrew Jackson. It is exactly a hundred years since Jackson succeeded in becoming the Roosevelt of his day, so the comparison is apposite; and it is further apposite because Jackson's election six years earlier was brought about by the first acceptance of manhood suffrage. Before 1928 the people had voted for President in some states, but not in very many, and as late as 1860 there was still one state which continued to choose its presidential electors without popular vote. It took a civil war to convert that state to the principle of direct suffrage.

There is great clamor, most of it admiring, over the change by which a President, without becoming a dictator, has become a ruler, with an assenting Congress to follow where he directs. The appearance of change is superficial only. Arbitrary dates can never be given for an evolution, but roughly it may be said that this began in Lincoln's administration and that each succeeding administration has only added another mile-stone. The reason why the general mind is so dazzled by today's appearances is the spectacular way in which, last year, Congress awarded to a President powers it had never granted before. But they were emergency powers and it was an emergency act, revocable at any time. Whether the powers will be revoked, or how far they will be modified, remains to be seen; but it is a well-known fact that in Congress Democrats and Progressives, from the Glasses and Byrds to the Borahs and Nyes, are as much determined on revocation or modification as the Republicans.

The evolution to presidential power, unintended by the Constitution-makers, began before its clear appearance in Lincoln's times and those of his successors. When South Carolina prepared to secede in 1832, President Jackson regarded himself as having the power to prevent her, and made a few military preparations. Whether he could have succeeded is a question; he was never put to the test, because Congress passed an act which made secession unnecessary from Carolina's viewpoint. To this day she regards herself as the victor in the Nullification crisis, and the evidence, mainly consisting of the Compromise Act passed to satisfy her demands, seems to sustain her.

When she again seceded, President Buchanan acted as any President before him except Jackson —whose act would not likely have been supported by the nation—would have done. He had, he said, no power to coerce her, but only to plead with her; and in this he voiced the general opinion, North and South. Lincoln, succeeding him, adopted the same policy with the seceding states, but six weeks later President Davis committed the mistake of firing on the American flag, fighting an all-day battle, and capturing an American army force. Debate was instantly suspended until what was regarded as an insurrectionary riot

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should be put down, and so, without intent on either side even then, a four-year war began.

The evolution in presidential power was marked by such steps as Cleveland's use of the army to put down a strike; each step a pace in advance of those taken before, until in 1933, to meet an emergency incorrectly assumed to be unprecedented, Congress invested the second Roosevelt with what were practically war powers, until they should be modified or recalled. Meanwhile the change in Congress itself has been evolutionary. At first the House was the important half, the Senate subsidiary; so subsidiary that Senator De Witt Clinton preferred the Mayoralty of New York City as more important. But the Senate increased in power. Again, it is impossible to mark evolution by arbitrary dates, but the material evidence first began to be visible in 1890, when the Reed rules began the process of turning the House from a deliberative body into a merely enacting one. They were slight steps, but, according to the usual process of evolution, were succeeded by longer ones under Speakers Crisp, Henderson and Cannon. In 1910 the Cannon Speakership was overturned, in form, by a revolt; but revolts do not overturn an evolution, and under the changed rules the House has shrunk until its deliberative character is now a mere form. What it really does is to vote, and then the Senate does the deliberating, but under rules that are beginning to fetter its deliberative power more and more.

As for the popular vote, that too is an evolution. From the very beginning "the people" voted in a few states, such as Massachusetts—that is, some of the male citizens did. More and more states joined, until in 1828 the male citizens, or many of them, voted in all states but South Carolina. The suffrage was gradually extended to cover more classes, though even today it is limited in many states, both of the North and South. The illogicality of excluding woman citizens resulted in a constitutional change which was no change in practical effect, for no national election has resulted any differently since then than it would have if women had remained voteless.

The machinery for choosing Presidents changes, but the more it changes the more it remains the same thing. The first few Presidencies went without much questioning to the obvious men, and then "the Virginia Dynasty" selected the Presidents. The form employed was a caucus of the majority party in Congress. The minority caucus named the opposition candidate. This method proved unpopular after a while. There was a brief interregnum during which candidates were nominated by state legislatures or mass-meetings. In 1832 Jackson and his advisers decided it would be well to have the candidate for Vice President chosen in some official way, so a national convention of delegates from the states was elected, which named Van Buren for the Vice Presidency. This was so acceptable an improvement on either "King Caucus" or the erratic and aberratory method of legislative or mass-meeting nominations that the parties adopted it for the Presidency as well as the Vice Presidency. However, as time went on it became apparent that King Caucus still ruled without the royal title. It was in Congress that the candidate was selected, though the forms prescribed the election of delegates through primaries and state conventions. If the Congressional directors could not name the candidate, as in 1880, they could and did decide who should not be nominated. For instance, the Democratic nomination of Parker, nominally made by the Convention delegates in 1904, was made in reality in Congress conferences two years before, and in 1920 the "Senatorial Sanhedrin" openly took charge of the Republican nomination of Harding.

In the early part of this century there was an agitation for choosing candidates through a direct primary. It was optimistically and erroneously assumed that this would deprive the bosses and machines of power to control the preferences of the voters, and at that time there was a great outcry against machines and bosses. It was in most cases a rather senseless one, since "machine" is only a nickname for "organization," and everything has to be done by organization, from a social club to a church. The "boss" was merely the leader of the organization. A few bosses were corrupt, and with the inborn human love for classification, corruption was assumed, in the popular mind, to be the mark of all bosses.

The direct primary came into being, but worked no change; at least, no such change as was expected. The bosses and machines continue to select the candidates. The voters ratify the choices at the primaries, except in the rare cases where the machines make the mistake of selecting a very distasteful candidate. Then the people, when sufficiently annoyed, pick somebody else, but—and this is a thing nobody ever notices—they had the same power before the direct primary was ever heard of. The most notable recent case of that kind was when the bosses gave the delegates to Taft in 1912, the Republican voters preferring Theodore Roosevelt. The only great change made by the direct primary was not beneficial. It made it impossible for a candidate to canvass a state without a huge campaign fund. This barred candidates who were not rich or who did not have the backing of rich men.

These are enough instances to support the point I set out to make: America in 1934 does not appear such a strange and new and revolutionary world when we take the trouble to see how it looked during many years of the past.

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THIS YEAR'S PASSION PLAY

By EDYTHE HELEN BROWNE

THIS year the Passion Play at Oberammergau is fundamentally the same production as that of years past, having the text by Father Otmar Weiss, a Benedictine monk of Ettal Monastery, and Father Alois Daisenberger, and the musical score by Rochus Dedler. But it is interestingly "different" in particulars. The cast's 700 impersonators (Oberammergauers spurn the words "actors" and "actresses" as smacking of commercialized theatricals), although they always bring reverence and prayerful recollection to the interpretations of their parts, seem this summer to be even more deeply imbued than usual with the grief of Calvary as they enact three times weekly the tragic episodes of Christ's life in presentations lasting eight hours. The Passion Play, produced decennially for three centuries, is still the abiding dramatic spectacle, but another drama, historically important, emerges this year and borrows applause from the Passion Play—a rare concession by villagers who almost "own" their audiences. Although the shaggy dome of Mount Kofel, the local landmark, is still the silent sentinel of the Bavarian village 4,400 feet below, its watch is disturbed this year by visitors flocking round its base and in and about the picturesque streets, ferreting out historic spots which in other days passed unnoticed.

This special 1934 season commemorates the three hundredth anniversary of the first Passion Play, which was performed in 1634 according to the vow made in 1633 that if the plague of the Black Death would abate the villagers would in thanksgiving enact the "Tragedy of the Passion" every ten years. The scourge ceased, and this year, which is also a year of Jubilee when Christian hearts the world over renew interest in the Passion and Death of Christ, Oberammergau renews her vow. Thus activities in the little Bavarian community are touched with new meanings and introduce slight changes.

Just as in 1633, before the snowy altar in the quaint parish church of Oberammergau, the Elders joined hands in solemn promise to acknowledge their deliverance by a recurrent act of thanksgiving, so now, in the present church, the singers of the Passion Play gather on the morning of every day of performance to sing Mass. This year a Solemn Jubilee Mass, composed by Wilhelm Mueller, composer of the "Kreuzesschule," is intoned in pious tribute to the town's own tercentenary and in honor of the Holy Year Jubilee celebrated throughout the world.

In the 1930 presentation, the rôle of Christ's Mother was assigned to Anni Rutz, clerk in the village saw-mill, daughter of Hugo Rutz, Caiphas of the Play. This was an excellent choice, for her portrayal of the sorrowing Mary was admirable, charged with fervor yet beautifully restrained. This summer her interpretation—she again impersonates Mary—has an added grace of voice. Miss Rutz's more intense absorption in her rôle is immediately noticeable. Heretofore she has depended upon gesture and the words of Daisenberger's text to convey sorrow; this season her voice rises and falls in a variety of tone shadings expressive of the tiny stings of grief as well as the fierce, obliterating shocks of sorrow.

Georg Lang, new director of the play, intensifies its acute moments and heightens its realism with mechanical arts and by assembling sets of newer, more dramatic scenery. For the Crucifixion scene Alois Lang, the Christus, elected to that honored part for the last production, himself suggested changes in the props to create bolder illusions. Several inventions enhance the impression of anguish of the tortured Christ. When the Saviour's head droops on His breast in death and the thorns of His mock crown seem more venomously protruding, the mangled body slumps so realistically it is difficult to believe that the impersonator still lives. This startling effect, perhaps the greatest of this year's stage business, is achieved by frequently rehearsed arrangement of the thongs that secure the hands to the cross. Even the solitary animal, the ass upon which Jesus rides in palmed glory into Jerusalem, is more capable in his part. He has been taken from the pastures of South Tyrol to replace his predecessor who came from Unterammergau and was under-nourished and therefore fretful during performances. The new ass is most docile, an important factor in the jubilant scene crowded with gay children.

The cast of the Passion Play changes from decade to decade. This year the rôles of Mary Magdalen, John, the traitorous Judas, and the noble Peter had to be filled. For the first time the Bavarian State Minister, Esser, whom Hitler also appointed High Commissioner for Tourist Traffic, presided over the election. Klara Mayr, daughter of Guido Mayr, Judas of the last production, was chosen for the sad Magdalen. Miss Mayr has a lovely grave face with large, meditative eyes and a mouth of delicate contour. Her profile, as she stands desolate against the grim shaft of the cross, half in shadow, assumes a tragic outline that visitors remember as one of the poignant details in the Calvary scene. Like the original Mary of Magdala, Miss Mayr has

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long streams of radiant hair that glisten on the pale limbs of the dead Christ as she leans over to help bind Him in grave linens. Her hands, performing this sad task, are richly pantomimic, truly expressive of her grief and deep amendment.

The traditional conception of the beloved disciple John is a man of youthful, of tender, frank countenance and smooth cheek, and with almost feminine grace. Willy Bierling, a sculptor, steps easily from real life into that gracious rôle, fulfilling without artifice its traditional requirements as to personal appearance and adding the essential of dramatic ability, especially noteworthy in the scene of the Last Supper when he regards Judas with an eye of aroused suspicion. In contrast, Judas is imagined as rugged of face and bearing and of brusque gesture. Hans Zwinck, continuing the dramatic work of his father and elected to succeed the woodcarver, Guido Mayr, is just the type of Judas one expects to see—dark and blunt-featured, with heavy hair and beard and dominant stride. This year's Peter, in the person of Hubert Mayr, rather upsets tradition than conforms to it. Formerly, Peters of the Passion Play have been older men with grandfatherly grey hair such as Peter Rendl of the 1930 cast had, but Hubert Mayr, a village milkman, is only thirty-four years old and a blond. Among the group of dark-haired apostles at the Last Supper this new Peter immediately arrests one's attention.

The side drama vying for honors and alternating with the Play, illuminating the historic background of Oberammergau, is a spectacle of five acts and twenty-six scenes written by Leo Weismantel, a poet of Obersinn, Rhön. It dramatizes the Thirty Years' War and the ensuing appalling days of the Black Plague, a pestilence of boils. Weismantel's narrative depicts the sudden plight of Oberammergau, plunged with the rest of Germany in the clutches of horrible death by the rashness of one Karl Schisler, a native of Oberammergau employed in Eschenlohe. Schisler's return through a lonely mountain pass to his home, ill, and the subsequent spread of contagion from his cottage to the whole town, and the historic promise by the Church Elders to dedicate themselves to decennial performances of the Passion if the plague ceased are told in the pageant.

Under the spell of the historic the visitor's sojourn with the genial, hospitable village folk extends beyond the day of performance. Oberammergau once meant a whirlwind two-hour trip from Munich, attendance at the Play, and a night flight back to Munich. This year visitors are passing many nights' sleep in downy Inn beds; they are "history-minded" this festive anniversary summer, and so linger among the villagers, straying leisurely about the town, finding most interest in spots historically significant. Many of the neat white cottages adorning the leafy streets are monuments to the art of Franz Seraph Zwink, an eighteenth century artist, for upon their gables are colorful frescoes of saints in ecstasy, angels and popes and whole companies of the Blessed in filmy glory. The "Burgomaster's House" is sprightly with figures in gay tunics and haloes. Another surface embellished with the art of humble Oberammergauers of the past is the wooden ceiling of the "Alte Post" taproom in the village square, decorated with the coats-of-arms of Oberammergau merchants. Matthaus Guenter considered the ceiling of a taproom unworthy of his art but the ceiling of a church claimant to it, so the parish Church, in baroque style reminiscent of the Wessobrunner School, which in 1936 will celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of its founding, is adorned with beautiful ceiling frescoes by Guenter.

Lang is perhaps Oberammergau's most historic name. The "Art Museum of the Heirs of the Georg Lang Family" not only treasures an antique collection of wood-carvings, from tiny Nativity lambs to life-size torsoes, but also the original manuscripts of the Passion Play of 1662, 1750 and 1870. The geranium-scented cottage of Johann Georg Lang, present director of the Passion Play and direct descendant of the famous Georg Lang family, is popular with visitors because it is a shrine for a revered object, the Christmas Crib. This "Krippe," appropriating an entire room in the Lang home, assembled by the loving, artistic fingers of an eighteenth century sculptor, includes two hundred figures costumed in robes and mantles of Passion Players of earliest years. Each face is a well-defined portrait. Then, near to this museum, is the Presbytery, where visiting genealogists spend hours perusing the "Memorial Book of the Dead," sacred to the names of past generations of Oberammergauers.

The White Planet

Single as one consuming love, once given,
Bright Venus blazes into the smouldering dusk,
The only pharos in the expanse of heaven—
Planet presaging all the stars to be,
Sole prophetess.
She is the solitary and aloof;
Companionless,
She burns between the darkness and the light
Breathlessly bright,
Like a far crystal fire
In her slow-sinking flight.
Her beauty fills all space,
All glory hers, all grace—
The heaven's whole glow
Is gathered in the glamour of her face.
She is the One, ineffably afar,
The archangelic Evening Star.

AGNES KENDRICK GRAY.

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NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

By MARJORIE McGILLICUDDY

AT THE end of 1933, Secretary Perkins said that she considered the passage of the Wagner-Peyser Act, the finally adopted version of the National Employment Service Bill, the outstanding event of the year from the point of view of the Labor Department. The administration of the Wagner-Peyser Act rests with W. Frank Persons, director of the United States Employment Service, a bureau in the Department of Labor, and with the directors of the affiliated state employment services. The eighteen states already in full standing as members of the new cooperative state-federal employment service include all but one of the highest ranking industrial states, 58 percent of the population of the United States, and over 72 percent of the wage earners of 1930. Their employment services received for the fiscal year 1933-1934, $625,069 of the federal allowance of $1,125,000, plus $1,065,224 of their own money. The annual federal appropriation of $4,000,000 for the Employment Service during the next four years will, moreover, nearly triple last year's allotments.

The development of a national employment service for the United States has been erratic. The oldest state employment service—in Ohio—dates from 1890. The present New York service is nineteen years old. States have inaugurated, discontinued and reestablished their employment services at irregular intervals during the past forty-four years. In all, forty state labor departments have legal authority to conduct employment offices, but only twenty-one state systems were in operation when the Wagner-Peyser Act was signed. The United States government entered the employment office business indirectly in 1907, first undertaking to aid immigrants in their choice of residence and occupation, and, when immigration slackened after 1914, offering to assist in the distribution of harvest labor through the wheat, cotton and fruit-growing belts.

The Wilson administration expanded the federal service during the war to mobilize labor for the essential war industries. The government forbade advertising for help and compelled all who employed certain kinds of workmen to hire them through the United States Employment Service. At the end of the war, the war industries laid men off and the demobilized military forces increased the supply of idle labor. But the United States Employment Service was unable to take up the problem of seeking jobs; within a few months of the Armistice, Congress cut the U. S. E. S. appropriation from $5,500,000 a year to $400,000, and the number of offices immediately fell from 850 to 200. By 1928, the U. S. E. S. appropriation was down to $200,000, of which only $49,500 went to "cooperating" local offices in the form of salaries to clerks. By April, 1933, the number of cooperating offices had dropped to 125.

From the first Kenyon-Nolan bill to the fourth and final Wagner bill, all the proposed laws have contemplated dollar-for-dollar grants by the United States Treasury to states maintaining suitable systems of public employment offices. The Wagner-Peyser Act divides responsiblity between state and federal governments by assigning the management of local offices to the states and the coordinating and research activities to the Federal Service. The pooling of information concerning the entire labor supply and demand is possible only if all the employment offices belong to a closely knit system. Many years have passed since a city or county could supply exactly the number and kinds of jobs needed to keep busy all the resident workers and no more. Even the state is not an industrial unit: witness the daily influx into New York City from New Jersey and Connecticut. The time and money spent in aimless job-seeking in distant parts of the country are too often wasted. A clearance system gives employers and applicants equal access to a widened field of opportunity. The New York State Employment Service has successfully maintained a clearance office for some forty non-profit-making employment agencies in New York City. Under the Wagner-Peyser Act, states affiliated with the U.S.E.S. must maintain clearance activities within their own borders; the U.S.E.S. will eventually establish interstate clearance—the first since the war.

In the early days social welfare organizations would urge legislatures to open state employment offices to protect the unemployed workman from the exorbitant rates, fee-splitting with company foremen, and other evil practises to which private agents were addicted—especially when jobs were scarce. The San Francisco longshoremen's protest against pool-room "hiring halls" is an echo of the battle against saloons and lodging-houses as employment offices. The lone state employment office, situated in the capital, with dingy quarters in a side street, with a manager of negligible qualifications, and without time or money allowance for publicity among employers, might be the whole state system. City employment offices, usually opened in depression periods, were practically poor relief agencies, awarding jobs to applicants on the basis of need. It is not surprising that the public employment office was

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the last resort of self-respecting laborers, a refuge of casuals.

About twenty-five years ago, at the time the English Parliament passed the National Employment Exchange Act, economists began to recognize the employment exchange system as a means of lessening unemployment. Figures are lacking for the United States, but English unemployment insurance records for 1930 show that from one-fourth to one-third of the 12,000,000 registered insured workers were unemployed and reemployed in less than a year. Even an honorably managed private employment agency may contribute to unemployment because of its interest in collecting frequent fees. An unscrupulous manager in collusion with a greedy company foreman or employment superintendent is an actual cause of unemployment. It is still impossible in many states to abolish the abuses practised by dishonest private employment agents. Licensing is the only effective weapon not yet condemned as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Public employment office managers, being unaffected by the consideration of profits, are in a position to concentrate on good placement work, the key to lower rates of turnover and less waste of time for both employers and workers.

Ideally, the national employment service should eliminate casual labor by inducing employers in the industries affected to hire their temporary labor through a central exchange where a single waiting-list is on file. The exchange should keep the list short enough so that those remaining in the formerly casual occupation may earn a decent living. Such a system of hiring dock workers in Liverpool was the proposal of Sir William H. Beveridge, first director of the English Labor Exchanges. After the "squeezing out process" has resulted in a short list, the employment interviewer's ingenuity comes into play to find other work for the squeezed out. Ideally, also, the employment interviewer advises seasonal workers to prepare themselves for trades which flourish in the off-seasons and so dovetail their occupations.

The ideal employment interviewer spends part of nearly every day cultivating an acquaintance with the needs of employers and with the changes taking place in industry. Over a period of years he can detect signs of a steady decline in certain industries in his field of operations, and a steady growth in others. By studying his records of applications for work he can observe what classes of workers are being laid off, what trades or professions are decaying. Periodically he is expected to summarize his observations by reporting trends in industry, and writing descriptions of occupations. The U. S. E. S. Division of Standards and Research is responsible for collecting such reports from the entire country and publishing descriptive and statistical bulletins.

The more occupational information the employment service can deliver to the schools, the more likely it is that we can avoid too heavy recruiting in overcrowded trades or professions. The younger generation need not feel cramped in selecting occupations, however, for 3,000 are listed in the census, and vocational experts tell us that 50 percent of the people can do 50 percent of the jobs with a fair show of efficiency. A research project directed by the U. S. E. S. will provide information concerning likenesses among numerous groups of occupations. Technology will lose its terrors if this study reveals many such possibilities as transforming a watch-maker into a maker of false teeth or a repairer of radios. The increase in so-called service occupations at the expense of the productive trades will undoubtedly lead to advice to the displaced mechanic or factory worker to learn to sell the product he used to make.

The U. S. E. S. demands acceptance of minimum standards of operation before approving a state's application for its share of the federal appropriation. State employment services submit to the Division of Operations full statements of their methods of operating, present and proposed, photographs of the quarters they occupy, and detailed records of the training and experience of each member of the staff. The Division of Operations has elaborated an outline of the educational qualifications, practical experience and personality traits desirable in the various grades of employees in a local employment office. The object of standardized description is to lay down the rule of merit in making appointments.

The list of duties of a senior employment interviewer in New York is silent proof that the work is exacting: "To have supervision of a division or section of a local employment office or charge of a small branch office; to secure data for the preparation of adequate job specifications; to do the more difficult and technical work in connection with the interviewing and registering of applicants for employment; to judge applicants' qualifications; to select and refer such applicants to positions suited to their ability, training and experience; to give vocational advice to applicants; to make job analyses; to visit places of employment to solicit employment opportunities; and to perform other incidental duties, as reports, follow-up work, circularizing. . . . Candidates must have good personality, tact, and be physically fit to do field work and continuous interviewing."

At the request of the International Association of Public Employment Services, the American Statistical Association Committee on Governmental Labor Statistics undertook in 1930 a study of the statistical procedures of public employment offices in the various states, in Canada, and in

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European countries. The U.S.E.S. Division of Operations submits all forms and recording plans to this committee before making final adoptions. Hereafter, affiliated employment services will send into Washington reports based on one set of definitions of such terms as "applicant" and "placement." Thus it may be possible to compare the efficiency of two or more state services, and to estimate the value of the national service as a whole. Any program for stabilizing employment through public works construction will be useless if not timed to stop the downward trend of employment as revealed by reliable statistics covering a period of years. Uniform statistics pouring into Washington at regular intervals would furnish the ammunition for fighting the advance guard of another depression.

The federal standards so far established are, as the law states, minimum standards. In many states they will bring about marked improvements in the appearance and location of offices, the quality of office equipment, methods of procedure, and requirements for staff membership. Several states, moreover, have plans for advancing beyond the minimum: developing a more dependable foundation for vocational guidance by research activities and contacts with employers and with schools; opening separate offices for different classifications of applicants; expanding their services into communities hitherto beyond the reach of state employment offices; and developing new techniques through extended experimentation in model offices.

Lately, the public exchanges have made deliberate efforts to appeal to the white collar worker. In Minneapolis and in Rochester, the clerical and professional divisions are now housed in separate office buildings; before long one of the four New York City centers will be reserved for the clerical and professional division. It is unlikely that the public agencies will displace professional associations and philanthropic agencies in this field, but it is desirable that an interchange of information be possible.

The administration of unemployment insurance would undoubtedly be a function of the U. S. E. S. In England, and in eight other countries where unemployment insurance is compulsory, the applicant for insurance benefits registers at the public employment office as soon as he loses his job. He must report daily thereafter so that the exchange can send him to apply for suitable work. Unemployment insurance is, therefore, a means of securing full and accurate day-by-day statistics of the exact composition and size of the "army of the unemployed." Employers cannot help knowing of the existence of the office in charge of distributing their insurance contributions; wherefore, they will realize that if they are hiring, it is better to take men from the public exchange and thereby stop the drain on the insurance funds. Insurance, therefore, would bring more employers to the public employment offices. On the other hand, the distraction of registering insurance eligibles, paying the benefits, and settling disputed cases has lowered the efficiency of placement work in the English Labor Exchanges.

The attitude of organized labor was doubtful in the early days of American public employment offices. In some states the federations of labor sponsored the public agency laws, and in other states opposed them. Opposition was based on the fear that public offices would compete with union bureaus, and, if strikes occurred, supply scab labor. But since the war, both the American Federation of Labor and the Railway Brotherhoods have sent approving delegations to Unemployment Conferences and to Congressional Committee Hearings. Some employers have suspected that the public employment offices would corner the labor market, and encourage strikers by refusing to supply labor for vacancies due to industrial disputes. Experience has proved that the fears of both parties were unwarranted. Most state laws, as well as the Wagner-Peyser Act, prescribe neutrality of public employment offices during labor disputes. An employer may send an order for strike-breakers to the public employment office, but the interviewer must notify applicants that a dispute is in progress. The applicants decide for themselves whether or not to seek the strike-breaking jobs. Several state laws at present forbid penalizing applicants who decline such opportunities.

Under the Wagner-Peyser Act, an advisory council will be attached to each public employment office. State councils will supervise state employment office policies. A national council advises the U.S. E. S. Besides assuring both employers and labor of the impartiality of the public employment offices, the council serves as a vehicle of publicity for the employment service. The state councils in New York and Wisconsin pass upon the personalities of candidates for staff positions when they have satisfied civil service commissions by passing written examinations.

A few states, particularly Ohio, Wisconsin and New Jersey, make sure of local interest before establishing a public employment office. The Wisconsin policy is to call upon the city or county to provide office space, lights, telephones and janitor service. The development of public interest—employers' interest, especially—is the immediate need of the U. S. E. S. Soliciting and circularizing employers, instituting advisory councils, and encouraging local financial participation can set in motion the forces that will produce this interest. After the interest has been aroused, the U. S. E. S. must prove its value by consistently good placement work.

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SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—Mass for international peace will be celebrated every month in the chapel of the great statue of Christ the King which was recently dedicated by the Bishop of Annécy in the presence of thousands of people. Facing Mont Blanc and resting on the Mont des Houches at an altitude of 6,566 feet, the complete monument is itself higher than a ten-story building. * * * Bishop Turner of Buffalo, Father Sweeney, S.J., president of Canisius College, Secretary of War Dern, and Governor Lehman of New York, took part in festivities at Fort Niagara which called attention to one more episode in the history of America in which Catholics played a leading part. * * * According to an official report there are 18,850 Brothers of the Christian Schools (Christian Brothers) with 313,436 pupils in 60 provinces throughout the world. * * * The *Catholic Worker* of New York is now publishing a series of penny pamphlets on Catholic Action. * * * Sessions of the Bureau of Medical Authentication at Lourdes, to which any physician, regardless of his religion or nationality, is admitted, were attended by 896 doctors, four American and one Canadian, during the past year. The Bureau authenticated 88 cures, rejected 17 and withheld decision in 71 cases in 1933. * * * The Associated Press reports that scores were hurt when Mexican police attempted to break up a demonstration of 30,000 Catholics who marched to the Presidential Palace where they stood in silence for some thirty minutes as a protest against the refusal of the Mexican Government to reopen a certain number of churches. * * * In announcing a Catholic Radio Hour which will be broadcast in the Orient every Sunday evening, Archbishop O'Doherty of Manila said it would be "a simple, clear exposition of Catholic doctrine."

The Nation.—The textile strike, the elections, the NRA control organization, the arms inquiry and the Morro Castle disaster, were outstanding news events of the past week and are reported in individual paragraphs elsewhere in this issue. * * * During the week, Attorney General Cummings announced that repeal had brought about a substantial reduction of the number of prisoners in Federal detention institutions. In August 1933 there were in Federal prisons or farmed out in state or county jails, 18,636 prisoners compared with 15,433 this year. Mr. Cummings thought that this reduction would be counterbalanced in a few years by increasingly stringent enforcement of the Internal Revenue laws which replace the prohibition laws. * * * Excess reserves of the member banks of the Federal Reserve which have been touching all time highs above $2,000,000,000, were off sharply $220,000,000 in the week. Items which reduced member-bank reserve balances were a net reduction of $18,000,000 in monetary gold stocks, a rise of $74,000,000 in money in circulation and an increase of $143,000,000 in United States Treasury holdings of cash and deposits. The Reserve System also reported a rise of $112,000 in industrial advances, bringing the full amount of its industrial loans to $922,000. * * * Chairman Jesse H. Jones issued a statement absolving bankers and industrialists for the disappointing results under the Loans to Industry Act. He declared that the obstacle to the reduction of the over-liquid condition of banks at present and a brisker demand for facilities of the Federal Reserve System and other newly created credit sources was the uncertainty of bankers and industrialists that markets could be found for manufactured products which could be produced with the aid of new loans. * * * Orders for 2,000,000 pounds of lard, 250,000 pounds of cottonseed oil, 5,000 automobile tires and deliveries of over 1,000,000 pounds of sweet pickled meats and salt bellies, in addition to substantial orders for automobiles, paper, wheat and other farm products and fabrics, were announced in Washington as immediate results of the recently concluded reciprocal trade agreement with Cuba.

The Wide World.—Nationalism flared violently in Italy, where Mussolini passionately reaffirmed the desirability of the martial spirit and pushed efforts to increase the birth-rate as a major defense weapon. At the same time Il Duce rushed troops and supplies to Africa, the press hinting that a "threat" to the stability of Italian colonies there had been reported. Despite official words of caution, it was declared that an accord was being arrived at with France, the chief items under discussion being colonial relations and naval parity. What effect this move would have on Central European policy was not stated, but anxiety was openly voiced in Budapest that Mussolini was likely to cease being the champion of treaty revision. * * * In Germany, too, nationalistic enthusiasm was raging like a fever during a week of National-Socialist celebrations at Nuremberg. The hostility of foreign powers was challenged; and it was announced that a "rigid" program of youth training would be put into effect in order to guarantee the stability and integrity of the Reich for a "thousand years." The coming Saar plebiscite had caught the popular fancy and led to endless singing of the Horst Wessel Lied. With foreign business virtually at a standstill and the prospects for a marked dearth of raw materials looming large, the outlook for "sacrifice" was so good that times like those of the last years of the War are being predicted. * * * On September 10, the Assembly of the League of Nations gathered in annual session. The chief business to be transacted will of course be the status of Russia as a candidate for admission. Some opposition will be manifested, but the general feeling is that, since the German issue is paramount in European politics, the entry of the Soviets will virtually make the League a world force against Hitlerism and therefore be a welcome development. * * * The Acting Head of the State Department announced

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that debt and credit conversations with Russia had been concluded "without any satisfactory result whatsoever." It was hinted that the unwillingness of Moscow to accept anything less than an outright loan had been chiefly responsible for the impasse and that details concerning the whole matter might be made public. * * * The Philippine Constitutional Assembly opened without tangible evidence of anything more useful than oratory.

* * * *

Textile Strike.—The textile strike to the time of writing continually sharpened and tightened. The United Textile Workers demand: recognition, a thirty-hour week at present forty hours' pay, limitation of machine load, permission to collect union dues on mill premises, machinery for adjusting grievances and no strikes or lockouts during life of proposed one-year agreement. George Sloan, president of the Cotton Textile Institute, said: "I regard the points at issue as follows: First, whether the code shall be amended by strike; second, whether the strike is the right method of compelling recognition of a particular union which represents only a minority of the cotton textile employees. The third issue which seems to me to be paramount is whether workers who have gone to work in the face of the strike call are to be deprived by intimidation and violence of their right to work." President Roosevelt created a board of inquiry and voluntary arbitration made up of Governor John G. Winant of New Hampshire, Marion Smith, an Atlanta attorney, and Raymond V. Ingersoll, President of the Borough of Brooklyn, New York City. Meanwhile the National Guard was out in southern mill states and in Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Maine, clashing constantly with picket lines. On one day alone—September 6—seven men were killed. President Green of the A. F. of L. announced the full support by his organization of the strike, and there were sporadic hints of a general strike. Commenting on the mobilization of the National Guard by Governor Brann of Maine just after he was assured reelection, Francis J. Gorman, leader of the strike, said, "There will be more elections, and the textile workers will know how to vote."

The Maine Vote.—Maine woods and hamlets being considered a good political barometer, the outcome of the primaries was regarded with much interest. Veteran Senator Frederick Hale, a Republican indispensable, won out by a narrow margin of 1,238 votes whereas his majority in 1928 was 82,000. The Democrats elected their "New Deal" candidate for governor, Louis J. Brann, by more than 33,000, and ousted one Republican Congressman of venerable mien. As a consequence of these proceedings, Postmaster-General Farley sent out a message of jubilation, saying among other things: "If the Roosevelt policies have met with such approval in rockribbed Republican Maine, it needs no lightning calculator to figure out how the rest of the country feels about it." Some Republican commentators professed to see in the outcome a proof of the political efficacy of relief funds adroitly distributed. Mark Sullivan reported that even Maine Republicans felt that the state "would be better off with state officials sympathetic to the Washington source of funds for public relief and public works." On the other hand the stalwart New York *Herald-Tribune* declared editorially: "The Republicans by ignoring the obvious moral of the challenge and nominating weak candidates of small appeal to youthful and progressive citizens, surrendered their only chance for a real battle." There was universal belief that in Mr. Brann the Democrats had found an able, intelligent and popular state leader, whose political future will bear watching.

Louisiana Safe.—A new era in American politics was ushered in when Senator Huey P. Long defeated the candidates sponsored by the "regular" Democrats of New Orleans, headed by Mayor T. S. Walmsley, in a September 11 primary election. This fight was the climax of a long struggle during the course of which Long, once a super-salesman and always a rip-snorting spell-binder, acquired complete power over the state government. Having bellowed his way into the Senate, he manoeuvered his own governor into office and survived unscathed an attempt by hostile Washington Democrats to impeach this rallier of "the common people." Louisiana, being an old-fashioned state, uses forceful methods in deciding elections. Opposition voters find themselves ruled out by the political group in charge of given polls. Therefore, as a prelude to the election just held, Long commandeered the state legislature and put through an order dispatching the Louisiana National Guard to New Orleans in order to guarantee an "honest election." Mayor Walmsley, not to be outdone, organized 1,500 armed police and suggested fighting it out. Eventually a compromise was reached. The elections were entrusted for safekeeping to a committee of arbitration; and the whole nation waited tensely to see whether the oratorical brawl would finally end in a spatter of bullets. But the day appointed for the voting was moist and calm. The citizenry lead-pencilled its crosses while the military dozed. "Kingfish" thereby acquired an extra layer of crown and emerges one of the nation's most triumphant politicians—a name to conjure with and a vote-getter without an equal.

A Victory for Labor.—After a period of four weeks the strike at the largest plants of the Aluminum Company of America, a Mellon concern, was terminated by an agreement described by Fred Keightly, government mediator, as "mutually satisfactory." The agreement bears evidence of concessions by both sides. The company "recognizes and accepts the principles of collective bargaining" as provided in the National Industrial Recovery Act and contemplates no reduction in the existing wage scale. On the other hand the question of the "closed shop" was not involved, and the company signed no agreement with the American Federation of Labor, which had sanctioned the strike. Recognition of the union as the collective bargaining agent of the employees was extended in effect, however. Future disputes not settled to the satisfaction of both employees and company officials may by mutual consent be submitted to the National

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Labor Relations Board. A spokesman for the Aluminum Workers' Council declared that the agreement "will greatly improve the workers' bargaining position through the unqualified recognition by the company of the fundamental principles of collective bargaining established by the recovery law." On September 7 more than 8,000 men and women returned to their posts at various Aluminum Company plants.

Speech on the End of an Age.—At the centenary anniversary of the Bremen Y.M.C.A., Ambassador William E. Dodd, formerly professor of history at the University of Chicago, analyzed at length the War, the post-War decade, and the crisis—"It was the end of an age that had begun with Columbus and Luther, an age of hyper-nationalism, overbuilding of great cities, an amazing increase in machine production and unprecedented exploitation of the masses by a few thousand industrial and financial masters." Reports of the speech gave almost innumerable contributing causes to the depression: rejection of the League of Nations and continued development of national hatreds, militarism and armaments, tariffs and quotas, the insistence on gold payment of debts resulting from the War, the creation of artificial foreign markets by bad loans, financial speculation and crippling financial dishonesty, the insistence by the powerful on low income taxes and refusal to pay off the national debt, heedless extension of instalment buying and mortgage loans especially to impoverished farmers, and technological unemployment. "Never in history have the privileged groups behaved in more suicidal fashion. . . . It is hard to imagine such blindness to the realities of life among those professing to be Christian educated peoples that the years 1920 to 1930 revealed." He reviewed the condition of the world at the time of the rise of Christianity and claimed that now "the Christian principles of self-sacrifice, love of one's neighbor and cooperation among rivals are of paramount importance" and "would mean more to the world than any party action or national egotism."

Human Music.—By means of charts recorded by highly sensitive instruments, it was demonstrated by Harold G. Seashore, Eastman fellow in the psychology of music at Iowa State University, that great singers effect color in their singing, emotion and richness of tone, by singing slightly off pitch. The demonstration was given at the meeting of the American Psychological Association at Yale University. The charts had been made during songs by Tibbett, Crooks, Homer, Ponselle, Kraft, Baker, Marsh and other widely appreciated singers. "No artist ever sings in true pitch," Dr. Seashore pointed out. "The pitch designated by the musical score is primarily a reference level about which the artist deviates in an artistic manner. In a degree the artist hunts for the correct deviation from the pitch, oscillating between two pitches which may be as much as eight-tenths of a musical step apart." The "gliding attack" so universally condemned by music teachers, the charts revealed, was practised by all the good singers tested. Professor Edward L. Thorndike of Columbia University reported that extensive tests showed that the sound of words had nothing to do with their being considered pleasant or unpleasant. The commonly assumed superiority of vowel and liquid sounds and the inferiority of gutturals and aspirates he said, have been over-estimated. Meaning, he found, determined appreciation. For instance, "coral" was generally considered an agreeable word, while "quarrel" was disliked.

* * * *

A New NRA.—Informal announcement came from Hyde Park after General Johnson had conferred at length with President Roosevelt that the National Recovery Administration is to be remade. Its complex of legislative, executive and judicial powers is recognized and the new plan envisages a government of industry modeled after that of the United States. The legislative branch, appointed by the President and outside the influence of the executive, will formulate policy. The executive, presided over by the administrator, will run the administrative organization on lines laid down by the legislative department. The judicial branch will settle code disputes and contentions rising from code enforcement. The dictatorial authority of General Johnson will thus be curtailed. He is evidently scheduled for the position of administrator of the executive department. The sovereignty of this government is, of course, derived from Congress and altogether subject to national legislation. Furthermore, labor problems will generally be handled according to special federal laws under the National Labor Relations Board. Finally, all rulings of the new NRA will be theoretically subject to review by the ordinary courts. The evolutionary process of developing a government for business has not stopped, the announcement maintained, and further laws will later be presented to Congress.

The Arms Inquiry.—The Senate investigation into the arms traffic was turning up to the light evidence ranging from the widespread and apparently accepted uses of bribery in securing contracts for weapons and machines of war, and the sale to Japan of the latest type of aviation equipment used by the United States Navy, to the alleged intervention of the King of England in behalf of a British firm competing for a foreign order, and camouflaged plants in small European nations for the purpose of manufacturing submarines for Germany denied her under the Treaty of Versailles. To the maze of evidence which promised to rival in intricacy the disclosures before the Senate committee which investigated banking and finance, there quickly were added protests and denials which led to a conference in private between the Senate investigating committee, headed by Senator Nye, and Secretary of State Hull. Disclosures that former President Calles and President Rodriguez of Mexico had been interested in stock transactions involving the supplying of military planes to the Mexican government, and of circuitous negotiations with the opposing sides in the Chaco war, it was thought, might have diplomatic repercussions. Secretary Hull, however, announced his full sympathy with the investigation and Senator Nye said that there would be no let-up in the inquiry.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Romance of a People

THE RECEIVERS of the old Roxy Theatre have introduced a daring novelty in stage entertainment by importing a reduced edition of the Jewish pageant staged last winter in one of the large armories. This performance entitled "The Romance of a People" attempts in dance and symbolism, as well as in somewhat realistic pageantry, to depict the origins of the Jewish people and certain dramatic moments in their long history.

Unlike too many historical pageants, it tells of the errors as well as the triumphs and persecutions of a people. It shows us the Jews who had to be called back by their prophets from the ways of idolatory as well as the Jews who, alone in ancient civilizations, preserved the concept and the worship of one God. The transition to modern history is perhaps less fortunate, since it rings too loudly with the notes of persecution. There has been persecution, of course—bitter, sinister and insistent. Our very own days bear the most tragic witness to this. So it is not as to the fact of persecution, itself, that the pageant seems to over-deepen the emphasis. It is rather in the tone of acceptance which seems to have a touch of self-pity as well as natural grief and desolation. This is not, one feels, characteristic of the best spirit in the race of today. The least successful bid for world sympathy among the political nations of the world has come from those countries, like France, which refused to let facts plead for them and indulged in open appeals for sympathy. While the Germans, under Bruening, bore patiently the injustices of Versailles, they won the ever increasing respect of the world. They did not lose sympathy until they began to appeal for it.

My one criticism, therefore, of "The Romance of a People" is that it allows many most eloquent facts to be diluted with an expatiation on those facts. It becomes self conscious instead of remaining objective. I sincerely hope that this one criticism will be accepted as it is intended, in a spirit of real understanding of the injustices piled upon a race to whose tenacity and spiritual conservation the world owes a large debt.

In its external aspects, "The Romance of a People" shows theatrical inventiveness and imagination. It has color and movement and pictorial excellence, and the music, particularly that of the lamentations, is superbly rendered. At times there is perhaps too much emphasis upon the ballet form, as distinct from the more majestic movements of an essentially religious dance. But this is a minor fault in an effort of such scope and proportion. One hopes that this effort may stimulate further enterprise along similar lines.

New Gilbert and Sullivan

The complete "Gilbertians" of New York are happy at last in the current Gilbert and Sullivan season of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company of London. There seems to be no end to the appetite for these sparkling Savoy operas. Each season has had its quota of special revivals, not to mention the regular seasons of the late Milton Aborn's troupe. Yet each fresh interpretation brings an enthusiastic avalanche of spectators, eager to listen again and again to the flowing melodies, the exquisite chorals, and the inimitable "patter" songs.

The moral of all this should become obvious. We need a permanent light opera troupe in New York—with itinerant privileges, like the Theatre Guild. In these days of mediocre theatrical fare, thousands of people would rather spend money on the certainty of a good time than on the hazard of new fare. Even those who like constant adventure into novelty have a hankering, ever so often, to return to familiar beauty and grace. It is a pleasure to welcome the D'Oyly Carte players, in any case. They should be made a permanent part of the "recovery administration."

Morals Again—and Movies

Little dreaming how soon the facts would become self-evident, I wrote some weeks ago of the high necessity of unified standards for judging between "immoral" movies—that is, movies pointing a bad moral——and "indecent" movies, or those which hang upon a moral framework a pictorial treatment of vice that far outweighs, in public effect, the sanctimonious theme. The "battle for decency" will never be even half won until a responsible centralized group unites on an acceptable standard of appraisal.

But there is a still further point to be settled—namely whether or not to use blacklists, white list and "spotted" lists. The rapid output and ephemeral existence of most screen plays suggest one possible method of attack which might, in the end, prove quite as effective as a wholesale weekly list or series of lists. That is the simple method of concentrating fire upon the obviously and indisputedly bad films—especially the more costly products.

As a case in point, we might take the now historical example of de Mille's "Sign of the Cross." Using the age-old excuse of dramatic contrasts, this film made the story of Christian martyrs the vehicle for displaying some of the worst forms of late Roman vice, including vices of sexual perversion. Because of loud protest, some of the worst of these scenes were edited out before showing in cities outside of New York. Had the protest been really united and vigorous, many more changes would have been forced. The point is that the ever-present danger of having important films sent back for costly revision is apt to make the industry quite as watchful as a general weekly survey of all films. Moreover, in a general survey, there is more chance of disagreement—that is, more chance for Hollywood to create division among its critics. Resolute attack on flagrant cases might be better than scattered or divided attack on the entire film output. The same notion applies to united support of the occasional excellent film.

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COMMUNICATIONS

THE LAST TURN OF THE SCREW

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Your editorial in the August 24 COMMONWEAL, "The Last Turn of the Screw" prompts me to make some observations gleaned on a recent trip which I made to Mexico.

It is Mexico, not the United States, and to understand things Mexican requires that our notions of American mental processes be discarded. But how to view the Mexican scene without constant comparison to familiar things is another problem. Consider first the fundamental fact that Mexico either rejects alien things—that is people, ideas, religions—or accepts them, and in so doing absorbs them into herself, literally making them Mexican. She has no use for compromise, but has a devastating degree of integrity. In accepting the Church she has made of it something peculiarly Mexican, and so we are not dealing with the Catholic Church as we know her in America and Europe, but as she is in Mexico, which does not necessarily mean that she is less Catholic or Christian, but merely that she is more Mexican.

The people of Mexico are Indians, although there is a small layer of whites at the top. These are always growing numerically smaller, either through change in color, through exile, or, what is more likely, through absorption into the Mexican life stream. The Indian of preconquest days was a deeply religious person, whose whole life and history was dominated by a religious note. The Christianity offered them by their white conquerers was accepted, but in so doing it was absorbed and made Mexican, much to the despair of the early friars and often to the consternation in more recent times of the foreign clergy. It is this absorbent quality which makes the Church in Mexico incomprehensible to the outsider.

It is also this passion for absorption which was at the root of the revolution. It was not, as so many would have us believe, the effect of the evil machinations of Moscow, whatever superficial resemblances it may bear to it, but a convulsion of assimilating alien things and transforming them into things Mexican. The process has been a painful one for all forms of alien institutions; foreign business has suffered; and the Church, which had been under foreign influence and which had reached a position verging on material dominance, has by no means been immune. The persecutions practised are too well known to require repetition. The underlying cause for them, however, may be found not so much in the desire to stamp out religion as in the fact that the Church has always been allied with the propertied class and has herself been an important property owner. This class, be it remembered, had confiscated the lands of the Indian and had reduced him to a position of serfdom. Persecution of the Church is therefore fundamentally a revolt inextricably bound up with the persecution of the propertied class in an effort to win back for the Indian rights which for four centuries have been denied him. However deplorable these persecutions may be, the Indian sees nothing inconsistent in them, except that the politicians have carried them to extremes which he will not countenance. The life of the Church continues in the hearts of the people, and it is there that the secret to the whole riddle must be sought.

Among the qualities of the Indian that I would single out for consideration are the dominant notes of patience, humility and a sense of timelessness which pervade his being. His nature has undergone very little change since preconquest days, and he remains essentially the same person that the Spaniard found him. The patience which he practises has a quality which eventually reduces to impotence all forces of aggression opposed to it. So it is that the troubles of the Church are not met by righteous indignation or any form of coercion, but by patient forbearance. The sense of timelessness lends force to this weapon; the quality of humility gives it meaning. The deeply rooted religious life of the people has a quality of an elemental thing and is as real as life itself. It does not seem dependent on organization, the priesthood, or even the Mass itself, but has its roots more deeply grounded. It was evident wherever I went. In priestless churches I found services conducted by laymen. In the mountains of Vera Cruz I met an American priest, resident in Mexico for fifty years, and with him visited many Indian huts where I invariably found shrines and vigil lights burning. In one of them a young girl was teaching the catechism to a neighboring child. In still other places the normal life of the Church is resuscitating. No matter what the handicaps may be, almost everywhere religion is practised, even though its forms may have been altered by conditions. I gathered, in brief, that the religious life is not easily destroyed by political action.

It is for this reason that a protest such as you advocate on the part of American Catholics would, I feel, be ineffectual in helping to cause a change for the better. It is not the Mexican way. One Sunday I went to a Mass scheduled for half past six in the morning. The church was filled with family groups squatting on the floor (the children, asleep, rolled in serapes) who waited patiently for the Mass which eventually commenced at half past eight. This is the Mexican way: patience, humility, and forbearance. It is only by the Mexican way that full religious liberty will be restored.

FRANCIS D. WHITE.

THE LEGION OF DECENCY

Las Cruces, New Mexico.

TO the Editor: In this campaign of the Legion of Decency, there is a good deal of agitation at present about the desirability of establishing black and white lists of moving pictures, to be used as a guide for the public. On the face of it this would appear to be a good thing to do, but a little reflection confirms the wisdom of the Bishops' Committee. The trouble is that as soon as the Legion of Decency begins to establish white and black lists, it takes upon itself the burden of making decisions with which the public is almost certain to disagree at some point or other, and it runs a grave risk of bringing the whole movement into disrepute.

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Unfortunately there are ways of getting past a censor. The Bishops' Committee has very skillfully forced the producers to assume the burden of cleaning up, and the Legion is in no way involved in the censor's decisions. If an objectionable picture gets through or around his office, the Legion is perfectly free to rap the producer on the knuckles in any way that seems most effective. There is no necessity in that case for the Legion to reverse its decision or apologize for its own censor. There are no precedents to argue. A censor is necessarily between two fires, and it is better to let the producers take the risk than to put up one of our own men to be shot at.

One method by which the displeasure of the Legion can be effectively shown is the pledge as signed in many cities: to refrain from going to a theatre which has shown any objectionable picture within a week. Thus, even if a legionaire unknowingly goes to an objectionable picture, he has the other pictures on which to register an effective protest, and if a manager sees that a bad picture hurts his business all week, he will be very careful of what he shows. Another good method was used by a Catholic lady who went in all good faith to see a picture which was found to have some very bad features. The lady left in the middle of the performance, demanded her money back, and got it without any protest from the manager.

The "Index Expurgatorius" is sometimes cited as an example of the benefits to come from the establishment of a black list. Far be it from me to decry the worth of the Index; and I believe there are relatively few Catholics who would deliberately read a book because it is on the Index. But I regret to say there are those who will read books in spite of the Index, and there are also some who do not even read the Index itself. This could easily be the case with the official Black List of Movies, if such should be published.

Since it ultimately rest with the conscience of the legionnaire anyway, the best we can do is to train that conscience and force the producers to do their own censoring.

REV. HENRY D. BUCHANAN.

THE GREEN BAY CENTENARY

Green Bay, Wisconsin.

TO the Editor: In the interest of historical accuracy permit me to correct your editorial of the August 17 issue.

1. The special stamp was issued to honor Nicolet and not Green Bay.
2. President Roosevelt did not deliver his address from the railroad station but at the tercentennial grounds.
3. Nicolet was not a Père and not a missionary.
4. Nicolet landed on the shores of Green Bay and not on the shore of Lake Michigan.

I think we are more indebted to Reuben Thwaites than to Shea for our history of Nicolet. Father Campbell wrote a very fine character sketch of Nicolet in July, 1915.

RT. REV. MGR. JOSEPH A. MARX, V.G.

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BOOKS

Pope Pius as an Historian

Essays in History, 1896-1912, by The Rt. Rev. Mgr. Achille Ratti, now His Holiness Pope Pius XI: translated by Edward Bullough. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $3.75.

THE ESSAYS which make up this collection are merely a selection from the large number of contributions to learned publications which Monsignor Ratti made during the time he was a Librarian in Milan and at the Vatican. Though they are of unequal length they serve all the better to reveal the range of the author's intellectual interests and to bring out his competence to speak with authority as a critic and historian as well as a student of art.

The first essay, on "The Ambrosian Church of Milan," may be taken as a test of the author's qualities as a historian. The idea which dominates the essay is that "the history of the Church in Milan is the golden thread of the history of Milan itself." Before the Christian religion was preached in Milan the city had attained a degree of importance in Italy second only to Rome. It was "the first great stage on the roads from Rome to Gaul, the Illyrian provinces and Constantinople." Though the records of the early days of the Church in Milan are scanty, enough remain to enable the author to piece together a connected narrative down to the time when Constantine issued from Milan his famous Edict of Toleration which brought the era of the martyrs to a close. From that time the material for the history of the Church becomes enables him to give his description a note of familiarity which could never be derived from the jejune pages of written sources. Not the least merit of this essay is the sedulous care that has been shown in eliminating from consideration all documents that could not stand the most rigorous critical tests. The style is lively and vigorous and not lacking in color, and there is no hesitation to award praise where praise is due, as in the case of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, "the least barbarous of the barbarians." Many curious facts, unknown to historians, have been brought to light for the first time in these pages, but the quality which will commend the essay to discriminating readers is its great learning and its thoroughly scientific character.

The essays on Saint Borromeo were written by Monsignor Ratti for the review *San Carlo Borromeo* which he founded on the occasion of the third centenary of the canonization of the great Archbishop and Patron Saint of Milan. They are based on material found in the Ambrosian Library which remained unnoticed until he collected them. The essays deal with a variety of topics connected with the life, activities and the contemporaries of Saint Charles. Some of the essays treat of the influence of Saint Charles in the world of today. There is a short account of Saint Charles and America showing the manner in which the name and influence of the great Milanese Saint have been used in the promotion of works of charity and religion in the New World.

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There is a long and learned discussion of the "Schools" or Guilds of the Blessed Sacrament in Milan which will be of general interest, throwing much light on the organization and workings of these and other guilds in the medieval period. Another essay deals with the "Codex Atlanticus" of Leonardo da Vinci in the Ambrosian Library. It is one of the most valuable treasures of the Library, as may be judged from detailed description and history which Monsignor Ratti has written. The Codex received its strange name from its size and the vast range of the material it contains. The Settala Museum is the subject of another essay, in which the author is at pains to present a description of one of the most valuable of the early collections which contributed to give the Ambrosian Library its unique character. The collection of essays ends with a rather detailed account of Bernardino Luini's painting, "The Holy Family." Not since Ruskin astonished the English-speaking world by his descriptions of the works of the great artists of the Renaissance, has there appeared a more thorough criticism of an artist and his work than what we find here.

This series of essays will, no doubt, attract considerable attention because of the exalted station to which their author has been raised, but apart entirely from the place which Monsignor Ratti now holds in the Church and in the affairs of the world, his essays are deserving of notice because of their intrinsic merit, and because of the wealth of scholarly and at the same time interesting information they contain.

PATRICK J. HEALY.

An Interesting Poet

With Lips of Rue, by LeGarde S. Doughty. Dallas, Texas: The Kaleidograph Press. $1.50.

MR. DOUGHTY'S bitter and sometimes genuinely epigrammatical poem is written in a sequence of quatrains. A friend remonstrated with the seer for electing to become a hermit. At least one fancies he must be a seer, because his renunciations all drip with philosophy. The activities of modern man are hollow; his god is gain; and the herd is on a stampede. Sometimes Mr. Doughty's lines flash with a curiously vivid fire, as if some chemical were going up in the blaze. Again they seem to be too angry for more than a shout. But there is very little mere smoke, and the reader finds himself going on with enlisted sympathies.

Mr. Doughty has a gift for couplets, and might well be invited to write more in this medium. He does not always take full advantage of his skill in condensation. Sometimes he triumphs, as witness:

"The honeycomb of weal goes all askew.
Gruff muzzles on the fragile wax are pressed
Too grievously. The honey cloys the few.—
And of the rest? Ha, devil take the rest!"

PAUL CROWLEY.

Editor's Note: We regret that in the review of "First Childhood," by Lord Berners, in the September 7 COMMONWEAL, *the book was erroneously referred to as "My Life," by Lord Bemers.*

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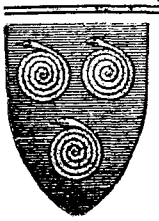
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Briefer Mention

A Thesasurus of Slang; compiled and arranged by Howard N. Rose. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

SLANG is here to stay and there is plenty of it. Mr. Rose says that his book is designed for the guidance of writers, who in their quest for appropriate lingo may find it helpful to consult him. Accordingly the terms are arranged in sections, e.g., college life, the oil fields, sports. The conventional phrases are given first. This makes the volume a little difficult to consult until one gets used to its pattern. The selection appears to be fairly complete and up-to-date. But whether it will greatly ease the pains of authorship is another matter.

Modern American Prose; edited by Carl Van Doren. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.75.

MR. VAN DOREN has compiled an excellent anthology of the literature which Mr. Van Doren likes. He is a critic with decided limitations of perspective, though also of frequently surprising openness of mind. The book is therefore an accompaniment to an easily imaginable course in current letters given by the editor. Emphasis is placed upon the definitely American note in contributions ranging from the narrative prose of Gertrude Stein to the criticism of Burton Rascoe. Conspicuously absent is Irving Babbitt; conspicuously present is, perhaps, Carl Becker. There is not a line by a Catholic in the volume.

Europe between Wars? by Hamilton Fish Armstrong. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

MR. ARMSTRONG, who is the editor of *Foreign Affairs,* surveyed the outlook for peace in Europe during recent months. He holds with General Bliss that war has actually been going on, though no communiqués have been issued from the front-line trenches. Though the immediate cause of friction is Germany, there is dominant throughout most of Europe the belief that social and political ends can be reached by force. The puzzle of the future on the Continent will be settled not only in accordance with the final outcome of the German chaos but also on the basis of what decisions are made in France. Meanwhile Mr. Armstrong supplies a good bird's-eye view of the situation in other European capitals. Much of the book appeared in the form of articles contributed to the New York *Herald Tribune.*

CONTRIBUTORS

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON, formerly newspaper correspondent and editor for the *New York World, Tribune* and *Times* is also an author of several books, the latest, "Presidents I've Known and Two Near Presidents."

EDYTHE HELEN BROWNE is a writer of historical and critical essays for current periodicals and newspapers.

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AGNES KENDRICK GRAY is a Georgia poet.

MARJORIE MCGILLICUDDY specializes in the study of employment problems.

PAUL CROWLEY is a translator and writer of literary comment.

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